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# Perfected Love (Please Be Patient, My Love Is Not Done Yet)

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## Activating First Love

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***Sermon: Activating First Love: Perfected Love (Please Be Patient, My Love Is Not Done Yet)***

***Lesson Text***

Psalm 37:37–38 (KJV)<sup>37</sup> Mark the perfect *man*, and behold the upright: for the end of *that* man *is* peace. <sup>38</sup> But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off.

1 John 4:18–21 (KJV)<sup>18</sup> There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. <sup>19</sup> We love him, because he first loved us. <sup>20</sup> If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? <sup>21</sup> And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

Psalm 138:7–8 (KJV)<sup>7</sup> Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me. <sup>8</sup> The LORD will perfect *that which* concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, *endureth* for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands.

***Introduction***

Last week we completed a 3-part miniseries on the three faces of love:

- EROS LOVE: Emotional Love that's a gift from God to give to each other
- PHILEO LOVE: Affectionate Love of friendship that is closer than a brother
- AGAPE LOVE: Sacrificial Love of God that is his very nature and is given to us

In this next series, still talking about First Love, we will look at activating love.

Revelation 2: **Nevertheless I have *somewhat* against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. <sup>5</sup> Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works;**...

To activate means to make active or operative; to reinstate, trigger, motivate, or stimulate.

Over the next several weeks we will look at how God wants us to move from a passive position when it comes to love (accepting things as they are); to an active position (taking the initiative).

Today we want to activate First Love by looking at it from the perspective of Perfection.

In our lesson text John uses this term “Perfect Love.”

Perfect here is from the Hebrew word “Tawm,” which means complete, perfect, one who lacks nothing. It is translated as being complete, sound, upright, blameless; the attainment of maturity!

Why does the process of Love bring us Stress, Suffering, Trouble, and Drama?

Why do the issues of Love create issues of Anxiety, Worry, Panic, and Fear?

Why do the results of Love leave us feeling Empty, Discontent, and Unfulfilled?

We will answer these questions in today's message, but they all boil down to the fact that our love has not been perfected. It has to take us through a process to reach maturity and completeness.

But just because we have not reached perfection yet, we should never allow perfection to be the enemy of the good. In other words, don't let our pursuit of perfection prevent us from accepting the good that we have achieved along the way.

Today we will look at three things that will help us perfect our love, the Role Model, the Mentor, and the Coach! The role model to emulate, the mentor to advise, and the coach to lead.

***Series and Sermon: Activating First Love: Perfected Love (Please Be Patient, My Love Is Not Done Yet)***

(Marking Perfected Love, Making Perfected Love, and Working Perfected Love)

### ***I. Marking Perfected Love (The Role Model)***

Psalm 37:<sup>37</sup> Mark the perfect *man*, and behold the upright: for the end of *that man is peace*.

The first key to perfecting love is marking or modeling it! We need a role model – someone whose behavior, example, or success others can emulate.

Why does the process of Love bring us Stress, Suffering, Trouble, and Drama?

We find love, but soon thereafter we argue, fight, have conflict, drama, and stress.

We lose our passion, become discouraged, become bitter, and even sometimes we cross the line between love & hate.

The reason for this is because we mark the wrong love!

Ps 37:<sup>38</sup> But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off.

Where do we learn how to love? From whom do we learn how to love?

Why are we falling out of love? Why is our love not working? Because we are marking people who know nothing about love!

Luke 6:<sup>39</sup> And he spake a parable unto them, **Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch?**

### **Marking Perfect Love Leads to Peace**

Psalm 37:<sup>37</sup> Mark the perfect *man*, and behold the upright: for the end of *that man is peace*.

The “perfect man” is one who is perfect toward God in that he trusts God and rests upon His salvation. The end of the upright man is peace. God will see to that.

1 John 4:<sup>8</sup> He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

Perfect Love is Love that is Complete in God!

Perfect Love is Love that is Mature in God!

Perfect Love is Love that is Peace in God!

Philippians 4: <sup>6</sup> Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

“Marking Perfected Love Brings Peace”

## ***II. Making Perfected Loved (The Mentor)***

1 John 4: <sup>18</sup> There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

The second key to perfecting love is making it! We need a mentor – a trusted advisor who guides and supports the less experienced, providing wisdom, experience, and honest feedback.

Why do the issues of Love create issues of Anxiety, Worry, Panic, and Fear?

When Love is imperfect, it causes us to live in fear.

1 John 4: <sup>18</sup> ... because fear hath torment.

This fear will manifest itself in multiple forms; sometimes through insecurity, lack of trust, disappointment, apathy, frustration, and heartbreak.

We fear the unknown, we fear things will never get better, things will get worse.

We put up walls and barriers, we don't want to be hurt again, all because of fear.

This fear is real, but it's based on the past! Past hurts, past disappointments, past anger, past betrayals. But the behaviors of the past produce fears in the present.

### ***Making Perfect Love Cast Out Fear***

A mentor teaches us and gives us the power to overcome our fears.

1 John 4: <sup>18</sup> There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: ...

Imperfect Love produces fear, but Perfect Love casts it out!

2 Timothy 1: <sup>7</sup> For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

And when we fear, we are not being made perfect in Love.

So how do we make perfect love that casts out fear? By increasing our faith!

God is Love, and without faith it is impossible to please God. The more you increase your faith, the more you are made perfect in love.

With Perfect Love, we cast out fear of insecurity because God will never leave.

With Perfect Love, we cast out fear of betrayal because we put our trust in God.

With Perfect Love, we cast out fear of heartbreak because God is a healer.

Marking Perfect Love Cast Out Fear

### ***III. Working Perfected Loved (The Coach)***

Psalm 138: <sup>8</sup>The LORD will perfect *that which* concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, *endureth* for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands.

The final key to finishing imperfect love is working perfect love. We need a coach – someone who guides and trains one to achieve specific goals; providing instruction and motivation to help one reach their full potential.

To have perfect love, we must let God perfect that, which concerns us by working on us.

Why do the results of Love leave us feeling Empty, Discontent, and Unfulfilled? Why do we feel Unhappy, Restless, Meaningless, Exasperated?

We feel this way because Love isn't finished yet, it's not matured yet, it's not perfected yet. It needs to be worked.

Psalm 138: <sup>7</sup>Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me. <sup>8</sup>The LORD will perfect *that which* concerneth me: thy mercy, O LORD, *endureth* for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands.

John 9: <sup>4</sup>I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

“Please be Patient, God is still Working on Me, Still Working on my Love, Still Completing My Love, Still Maturing My Love, Still Finishing My Love”

God will Perfect our Love by Working your Joy: James 1:2–4 (AV)<sup>2</sup> My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

God will Perfect our Love by Working our Patience: James 1:<sup>3</sup> Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. <sup>4</sup>But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

God will Perfect our Love by Working what he Started: Philippians 1:6 (AV)<sup>6</sup> Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ:

**Midweek Study Lesson Plan (Sermon: Perfected Love (Please Be Patient, My Love Is Not Done Yet))**

**Lesson Text**

- Psalm 37:37–38, 1 John 4:18–21, Psalm 138:7–8

**Sermon Outline**

- I. *Marking Perfected Love (The Role Model)***
- II. *Making Perfected Loved (The Mentor)***
- III. *Working Perfected Loved (The Coach)***

**Questions: (What was your main takeaway from this message?)**

**I. Getting to Know “Me”**

1. What is the most memorable piece of “mom advice” (or threats) you grew up with? (For moms: what is a memorable piece of “mom advice” (or threats) you tell your children?)
2. What is a good thing happening in your life right now? What makes it good?

**II. Into The Bible**

1. In 1 John 4:18-21, what contrasts does John make between fear and perfect love?
2. According to Psalm 37:37-39 and Psalm 138:7-8, what does the text say about the upright, the wicked, and the Lord’s actions toward His people?

**II. Life Application**

1. Where in your life do you feel you are striving in your own strength, and how can you invite God’s love into that struggle?
2. Does loving some people feel exhausting or joyful right now? After hearing Sunday’s sermon, what are some practical ideas for you to refuel your joy with God’s joy this week?